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TERRY THE TERROR;

Or, The Black Eagle of the Mountains.

By JOHN F. COWAN.



THE ROAR OF THE BEAR IS HEARD AS THE WARRIOR FALLS, IMPALED BY HIS OWN WEAPON.

TERRY THE TERROR;

OR,

The Black Eagle of the Mountains.

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CHAPTER I.

HE STARTS A GAME AND PADDY "COMES IN."

It was a game of life and death.

The steep-walled sides of the Canon Chelly were enveloped in thunder-clouds and the storm-wind swept along the wild pass with a vengeful hiss.

The rumbling of the opening storm was echoed by the reverberation of horses' hoofs in the valley, and out-sounded by the thunder of horses' hoofs on the hill-tops.

Plumed Navahoes were flying through the scudding mists above and one unaided but determined boy was stampeding a drove of Indian horses below.

His young face was weather-beaten, but the cheeks wore the redness of excitement, and the bold blue eyes shone like sapphires.

The jaunty plume in his deer-skin cap and the gaudy fringe of his hunting-suit gave evidence of the swiftness of his career.

A short "Spencer" hung at his back, and the ever-ready bowie-knife bounced at his girdle, while at the saddle-bow of his mustang was a heavy Indian hatchet.

This was Terence Terrill, better known as "Terry the Terror." He was honored by this paraphrase on his name not only on account of his fearlessness and reckless riding, but of the bitter enmity he bore toward the Apache race, more especially the Navahoe family of it.

He had been reared in the wilderness, and the habitual encountering of danger had steeled his spirit as a habitual hardship had his body.

This reckless daring in one so young had been born of a deep-seated principle of vengeance against the untamable Navahoes, who had, years before, killed or stolen a little foster-sister, Dora Gray, from the small settlement at the south-west mines.

That in the ardent boy should be awakened a strong feeling of revenge for the loss of his little companion, is not wonderful. He had so often heard the tradition of slaughter after slaughter, including the destruction of his own kith and kin, that his young nature was fired by an excitement of which the cold blood of the more aged adventurers in the wilds was incapable.

Not that the settlers were without pluck. Dad Gray, the senior and leader, was one of the first pioneers of the wilderness, and the very intimacy he had established with danger had dulled the edges of apprehension to a degree that was at times as laughable as it was startling.

The Navahoes and their associate thieves, the outlawed and outcast Santa Feans, had descended on the little ranch during the absence of the settlers, and swept away everything movable, and destroyed everything destructible.

"This is fortune-huntin' with a vengeance, Terry," said Dad Gray, as, on their return they stood grimly by the smoking ruins of their lodges. "There's all our wealth gone at a canter."

"And I vow, Dad, that they'll come back at a gallop!" was the quick response of Terry the Terror.

"How boy?"

"Their wealth is horseflesh, Dad, old man," answered the boy, "and, if they have left us without a bunking-place, there'll be many a greasy Navaho wench left without a wedding portion, or Nimblefoot has no feet. Git up, old boy."

Remonstrance and recall were equally in vain—off dashed the intrepid youth—and so it was that Terry Terrill was found audaciously raiding in the strongholds of the savage hordes who have so often and so successfully resisted the power of the Government itself.

But Terry knew no fear but the fear of failure in what he had so boastfully undertaken, and the storm through which he rode suited well with his feelings, and the name which his daring had won him.

"Yell, yell, you fiends, and choke!" he cried, as the wild calls of direction and warning were heard from point to point high up in the drifting clouds. "Go it, Nimble my boy. They're afraid to 'boulder' us for fear of damaging their own stock."

Suddenly down the mountain-side, as if his own rash words had precipitated them, came large fragments of rock, bounding with crashes more jarring than the thunder. They had been loosened from their places by the pursuers above.

"Phew! let's not holler till we're out of the canon!" cried Terry, as he heard the commencing rumble. "Bounce it, boy."

Then the livid lightning began to play along the higher crags, and under cover of it the wily and revengeful savages opened their random fire on the path below.

They knew that their own stock was suffering from the avalanche of stones thrown down by their own hands, and they determined that Terry should not escape.

A bullet whizzed past Terry's ear, and a bounding piece of stone hit his horse in the flank with a thud that knocked the wind out of him.

"This is getting rather hot, Nim," said the boy, "altogether too hot for cooking purposes. Gather breath. We'll take a bath. Wait! steady, old boy. I'll give that screecher a bee-line pass to the happy-hunting grounds. Steady."

His "Spencer" swung around as if voluntarily into his grasp, and the young adventurer, still dashing onward, scarcely less rapid than the wind, awaited the next glimmer of lightning which should illumine the cliffs. It came, lighting up the misty vail and throwing the image of a gesticulating warrior into relief like the "Specter of the Brocken."

As quick as the lightning flash came the report of Terry's repeater, succeeded by the death-yell of the "screecher," and the wild shriek of his horse as both tumbled thundering down the precipice.

"Number one!" he cried, as his noble little horse leaped over the writhing carcasses and held snorting on his way.

But wild war-whoops and the rapid plump of hoofs sounded simultaneously before and behind him, and he knew that the enemy were descending from the hills, bent on hemming him in.

"Ha!" said Terry, through his close-clenched teeth, "they've got us tight. Caged like canaries."

As he spoke, the hooting of a night-owl was heard, and Terry, already in the act of pulling Nimblefoot's nose to the stream, pulled up and called out:

"Is that you, Paddy the Whistler?"

"It's Paddy the Banshee, you may call me!" cried a half-choking voice, as a man and a mule, hardly distinguishable in the drifting storm came stumbling, tumbling, and any way at all down the declivity to the level.

"Why! Where did you come from?" asked Terry, breathlessly.

"From devilish bad company. I've been following your fortunes on the brow above makin' a skulk of myself to save your napper. Throwin' stones like Hercules in the wrong direction, and givin' a buff-skinned vagabond a Christian trip down the brae whenever I got a chance. Happy go lucky with the blessed batch of them."

The two were pondering along the river-bank while this rapid jargon was being rattled out. The yelling of savage encouraging savage sounded nearer.

"We're in for it, Paddy."

"Oh, I niver put my foot out yet that I didn't put it intil somethin', if it was only intil a graceful position."

"This is getting too hot," said Terry.

"Then there comes the water to cool it," cried Paddy, as the long threatened rain burst upon them in torrents.

The condensation of the clouds cleared the prospect, and they could now, through the drifting rain-drops, see their enemies swarming, crowd on crowd, in every direction, above—before—behind.

"Caged like canaries!" exclaimed Terry, repeating his former expression.

"Yes, by my word," cried Paddy, "and nothing but a brace o' duck 'll save the same canaries. It's a fowl proceedin' intirely wid yer larks."

"Then here goes to take water!" cried Terry, and with a quick turn he dashed into the stream.

"Oh, that a mortal should have all the dryness on the inside of him!" sighed Paddy, as he followed with a splash and a scramble, he and his equally eccentric mule rolling over and over in the discolored waters like a monstrous porpoise.

At that moment a ball struck the laboring animal, and he sank with a groan and a gulp, dragging the rider beneath the water with him.

"Curse yer leather pelt, ye haythen baste!" roared Paddy, after disengaging himself and belching the muddy water from his mouth. "Ye've killed the truest bit o' flesh that iver wore a hide. Make way, Terry, and report to the ould man. I can't help ye."

"Paddy! Paddy! Here!" cried the boy, excitedly, as he saw his companion strike out for the other shore, and thought how hopeless a task he had undertaken. "You are mad. Where are you going?"

"It's mad, yer right, I am!" was the thrilling answer. "I'm for the bank, for, by the sowl in my body, I'll have a red skunk's life forninst ivery nail in poor Puppett's shoes."

With these wildly spoken words, the strong swimmer started to breast the torrent toward the other side, unheeding of the calls of Terry.

Only once he turned and waved his hand aloft, and a tight-clutched knife gleamed momentarily in a vivid flash of lightning.

"Then for ructions be it!" cried Terry in his shrill, ringing voice, as he drew his knife and answered the Irishman's signal.

"Hooray!" resounded back over the water.

The leaden and wooden missiles were now pelting thickly and by no means harmlessly around Terry.

"Courage, Paddy. I am with you," he yelled, as he saw that the daring swimmer was being drifted downward.

Ceasing to struggle against the torrent, he whirled around and swept after his endangered friend.

But swiftly as he went he could not get within grasping reach, for the whirling current bore them repeatedly in opposite directions.

On, on, wildly and hopelessly, catching now and then a glimpse of the struggler's hand or head, until at last he lost him altogether. In vain he strained his eager eyes down the turbulent river—there was no sign of life.

He forgot his own danger in his comrade's calamity. He thought not of the pursuing enemy, the whistling bullets, or the singing arrows.

It was the gasped laboring of his poor horse that first aroused him, and he was aware that the firing had ceased. He then began to make for the bank.

"They know they are driving me into their own lair, and think they have me. We'll see."

CHAPTER II.

A STRANGE PRESERVER.

With great difficulty he neared the shore, and tried to urge his panting beast to mount it.

The gallant little animal made the endeavor; but, although the bank was of no great height, the wet edge crumbled beneath the hoofs, and horse and rider fell back into the water, and were waltzed still farther on by the current.

"Once more, before we cave in, beauty," was the inward expression of Terry, for he was too breathless to speak. "Once more—for life."

One more turn—one more desperate plunge obliquely through the rushing water toward the bank—one more clambering charge for solid land—once more the struggling beast is sinking back, when the boy-rider, with bold resolve, clutches the bridle tighter, and throws himself headlong over the horses' ears, falling face downward on the coveted land.

In this desperate moment, when his thoughts were rushing from the present to the future, and back again like lightning flashes, he both heard and felt some one approaching with heavy bounds, and he was suddenly seized by the

collar, while a large hand grasped the bridle alongside his own.

Who was this—captor or preserver? was his first thought.

If the former—he would rather die the death that threatened him.

He was thrown inland from the brink with a force that broke his weakened hold on the bridle, and, as he rose, half stunned, to his knee, he saw his nearly drowned pony pulled gasping from the stream by the same person to whom he owed his own life.

Was he friend or foe? again recurred the question, as he gazed at the stranger.

A tall, wild-looking figure he saw. The storm-drenched clothes clung closely to the form, long black hair fluttered wildly around the stalwart shoulders, and a single, storm-beaten plume bent heavily before the wind.

This last being the distinctive mark of the Navahoes, his hated enemies, Terry, with sudden impulse, drew his knife and started up, determined to encounter death rather than endure captivity.

The stranger heard the movement, and turned quickly, without any signs of apprehension, and a pair of wild black eyes flashed angrily upon the boy, but his gaze softened as he noted the chilled, trembling lad before him trying to nerve himself for combat.

"Yah! yah!" he cried, in tones that sounded like distant thunder, or the deep growl of an organ. "De chicken hawk feels like clawin' de eagle dat picked him up, does he? Ho! ho! ho!"

Terry Terrill was puzzled.

The voice of the strange looking character before him was decidedly Ethiopian, yet the figure and garb were just as decidedly Indian, and the features were brightly barred with war-paint, which, strange to say, was quite unblurred by the pelting storm.

"Come h'yar!" he roared, roughly, as if offended by the boy's scrutiny. "Come h'yar closer, and take a good look so's you won't forgit de face ob Nilo. De face ob Nilo am so berry easy to forgit. Ho! ho! ho!"

Terry thought otherwise, and retreated a step from the speaker.

Quick as thought the savage caught the boy's own hatchet from the saddle bow of the mustang and whirled it around his head.

"Stan' yer ground!" he roared, savagely. "Stan' yer ground! or, by de libbing Josh, I'll split ye to de belt."

Terry thought of his revolver, but he had lost it during his struggle in the stream, and he was cute enough to know that before he could bring his repeater forward the hurled hatchet would drink his blood.

There was no immediate danger, he thought, or before that the savage would have slaughtered him, so he obeyed the peremptory summons and stood still.

"Dat's right," said the giant, dropping the hatchet and stepping toward him. "What d'ye skar so for, chile? Why is you 'feared o' me? Ain't I bin yer friend?"

"Who are you?" asked Terry, involuntarily shrinking at the approach of his mysterious preserver.

"Stan' still, I tell you!" cried the other threateningly, and then as his great laugh rumbled hoarsely forth once more, he continued, "Poor ign'rant child, don't know me, ho! ho! Don't know Nilo! ho! ho! Boy, my footsteps have shook de pillow uner yer head, an' when you cotched yer rifle an' looked out ye couldn't see me, 'cause why, de fetish charm hid me from yer eyes, and ye thought 't was only de wind and rolled yerself closer in yer blankets. And ye war right, mostly right, for Nilo walks invisibly as de wind."

Terry gazed at the raving being in wonder.

"You want to know de pedigree ob Nilo, chile?" said the savage, laying his massive hand on the boy's shoulder with a clap that made him tremble. "He am de Black Eagle ob de Chelly, he am de debbil—de Matcho ob de Nabahoes. Yah! yah! ho! ho!"

Terry Terrill shrank back from the sound of mighty laughter, and gazed at him with a strange interest. Strange thoughts and memories were crowding upon him.

"You'se heerd o' me afore, young un?"

"Yes—but—I thought——" began Terry, in a bewildered

manner; but he was interrupted by the ever recurring rumble of his mysterious companion's laugh.

"Ho! ho! you thought——"

He was in turn interrupted, by the sound of hoofs borne around a bend by a sudden change in the drift of the storm-wind.

"Come on! dey're a-comin'," he said, quickly catching Terry by the arm with one powerful hand, and taking the mustang's bridle in the other. "Come on. Dar is only de one squad follerin'. De odders hab gib it up. Dey tink de ribber hab got ye, or dat dese 'll dribe ye into camp."

With these hurried words he started off with mighty strides at a rate of speed with which neither the jaded boy nor his equally jaded horse could very well keep up.

"De Black Eagle nebber runs from de Injun when he am alone. But he mustn't let 'em see him in de company ob a white, an' you're not a fetish."

"But you are running toward them," cried Terry, breathlessly, giving vent to his astonishment at an action so inconsistent with his companion's words.

On they rushed, the boy and the beast faint for want of breath, their strange guide fresh in his giant strength.

Now he drags them from the river edge and makes for the base of the hills.

A jutting bluff hides them from the view of the enemy whose clattering approach they can hear more distinctly every moment. At the nearer side of this lofty projection was the mouth of a wide ravine, and thither Nilo led the way.

On turning into it the cultivated bottom was seen to be thinly dotted with rude huts built in the Navahoe style; but there were no signs of life. This latter fact not being noted by Terry, he tried to hold back, for he began to suspect a trap, and to fear captivity was before him.

"Come on!" was the roar of Nilo, as he gave the boy's arm a jerk.

"Where are we going?"

"To de dead houses. Yah! yah."

"The dead houses?" said Terry, surprised.

"De dead houses," repeated the giant, with a deep chuckle. "De Nabbahoes nebber go ag'in into any lodge dat dey hab carried a corpse from, and dar's been more dan one corpse carried from ebery lodge in dat gulch. Ho! ho! Dey thought it war de plague. Dey didn't know dat it war de Black Eagle dat had killed dem wid obeah and fetish, and flapped his wings ober dem like de angel ob death. Ho! ho!"

Terry Terrill, to say the least, felt very uncomfortable at the odd actions of his strange guide.

The object of his thoughts was still stalking forward, waving his mighty arms and muttering.

A sort of vague terror seized upon the courageous boy as he watched him, and he was spell-bound to the spot until aroused by a reverberating sound which told him that his pursuers were rounding the bluff.

He sprang into his saddle and caught the bridle, but paused with indecision very unusual to him.

"We are between the horns of a dilemma, as Dad says, Nimble," he said, as the horse snorted and pricked up his ears. "I don't know which is best—to run from the red-skins or flee from the devil."

A commanding roar of the unmistakable voice ahead decided the question, especially as Nilo was rushing toward him with the strides of Hercules.

He started Nimblefoot up the glen toward the person from whom he had just thought of flying.

Nilo seized the bridle as they met, and with an angry cry increased the speed of the horse by his own superior gallop, for it was nothing less.

"You fool!" he cried, with a savage gnash of his terrible teeth. "Has ye got no ears? Don't you hear dat dar's iron shoes dar as well as hoof-horn? Dar's either whites or Mexicans along. Whites am cute an' won't scare a fip's worth at the dead houses."

They were approaching the first group of lodges, and, as if to suit the silent desolation of these deserted homes where life had once been joyous, they came in view on the sloping hill-side of the rudest of all grave-yards.

"Dar dey lies—what's left o' dem!" roared Nilo, as they dashed past the spot, following up the words with one of

his rough, horrifying laughs. "Now you go on. De game's hot. Git to de second lodge. Make yeself sightless. Be ready, but don't shoot 'cept any ob dem should git ahind me. Quick."

CHAPTER III.

WILD WARFARE.

There was no time for pause, and Terry, wondering what earthly or unearthly kind of resistance the Black Eagle was going to make, hurried toward the lodge indicated, and throwing himself from the saddle, urged his horse through the open entrance.

The last glance he cast backward before entering showed him the great figure of Nilo entering the first lodge, and at the same moment the lance points and dangling pennons of the Navahoes appearing around the bluff in advance of their bearers.

One quick look at the cylinder of his "Spencer" to assure himself that the cartridges were undamaged by the drenching they had sustained, and the boy chose a position in the creviced hut whence he could see all the movements of the enemy.

Six Navahoes and as many Mexicans plunged into view. The latter were armed with old-style carbines—the former with bows, spears, and the never absent tomahawk.

They pulled short up on meeting the fresh-printed tracks of those who were watching them, and the gesticulations and pointing of spears toward the "death lodges" told that a council of procedure was being held.

The Indians seemed unwilling to proceed, but one of the Mexicans spurred on the trail and his fellows followed him, the red men reluctantly moving along.

Nilo was right. The Mexicans, superstitious as they were, had not the awe for this death-haunted ground which possessed the Indians.

Suddenly the foremost party stopped with exclamations which could be faintly heard by Terry at his post of observation, and the Indians coming up reined in too, and pointed with their lances.

What at?

Terry strained his eyes in the direction of the pointing, but could see nothing but a portion of the grave-yard before mentioned.

What could have so suddenly stopped the pursuit?

Was this some maneuver of the mysterious Nilo?

No, the object of attention heaves in sight, moving among the crosses and mounds of the grave-yard.

A gigantic black bear lurching along, snuffing the ground as he goes, seemingly unconscious of the many eyes that are watching his movements.

There is a stir among the Mexicans and Indians. The interest of the human chase pales before this new excitement, and they separate and spread out in hunting order. Four of the Indians are detached and ride to one side out of the range of Terry's vision, but he knows they intend to come a flank movement on the bear.

The awe of the "death lodges" has left the Navahoes, and the spirit of the chase has taken its place.

The Mexicans examine their locks, and by signs to one another express their doubts of the efficiency of their arms. The Indians are equally despondent over their rain-soaked bow-strings, but a Navahoe is never at a loss when he has his double-headed lance in his grasp.

On these weapons, and the machetes, and knives of the Mexicans, the success of the struggle with the formidable animal is likely to depend.

Terry, forgetful for the time of his own danger, watches the scene with all the excitement of a hunter boy eager to join in the sport.

The party begins to advance slowly.

Terry glances at the bear. It has stopped at a grave and starts to scratch the ground, throwing the wet earth behind it in a shower.

Curses from the Mexicans and yells from the Indians burst forth at the sacrilegious sight, and the Mexicans being nearest, level their carbines at the offending animal, but no report follows. The rain has rendered the weapons useless, and they are cast aside with anathemas.

The Navahoes dashed forward with drawn bows and fired, but the wet strings threw the arrows only weakly.

Some fell short and some hit the shaggy hide and fell harmlessly.

The bear, with a terrible growl, ceased its ghoul-like work and started defiantly to its haunches, clutching the air with its forepaws and gnashing its great white fangs.

The bows were thrown away, as the useless carbines had been, and the hunters grasped machete, lance, or hatchet, and closed in.

Terry was so excited by the sight that he could scarcely refrain from rushing out to share in the conflict with the shaggy monster.

Where was Nilo? he wondered.

Ha! The foremost warrior braces himself in his seat and launches his deadly double-pointed spear at the upright black figure.

Wonder of wonders!

The shaggy form "ducks," the black right paw catches the lance in its swift passage, and hurls it back at its owner. The roar of the bear is succeeded by the ear-splitting screech of the eagle as the warrior falls, impaled by his own weapon.

Cries of horror arise from both Mexican and savage, and Terry sees the great bearskin cast aside and Nilo bounding toward the enemy, snatching the stakes and crosses from the graves as he goes, and hurling them with giant force after the terrified fugitives who are scurrying away with cries of:

"The Black Eagle! The Black Eagle!"

Springing over the stone-piled boundary of the burial-place, the terrible pursuer catches up the discarded carbines and projects them with deadly effect into the flying rout.

Terry's blood is worked up to fever heat, by the exciting scene, and he is about starting to join in the pursuit when sounds of rapid approach from the other direction strike his ear, and he remembers the injunction of Nilo:

"Don't shoot 'cept dey gits ahind me."

His time has come, and he braces himself to perform his part in this strange conflict.

The four savages detached to surround the bear are deceived by the sounds. They take them only for the signs of a close struggle with Bruin, and dash down to be in at the death.

Only when another of those frightful eagle screams rends the air, and they catch sight of their comrades flying in terror with the giant figure thundering in their rear, do they realize the state of affairs and turn to escape the swoop of the Black Eagle whose name they cry aloud.

But it is too late. Another avenger is upon them.

Crack! crack! crack! crack! goes Terry's repeater, quicker than the tongue can imitate the sounds, and to every report a death-yell answers, except the last.

In that case it is only the horse that falls, and the rider is frantically trying to extricate himself.

Terry rushes out to make sure of his man, but, as he presents, the Indian (a boyish, almost a girlish figure, slim, delicate, and extremely youthful) falls upon his knees with upraised palms, and pleading eyes.

Terry's heart was touched, and with an impulse of mercy he lowered his weapon. He felt that he was doing wrong, but he could not help it. His heart overcame his reason.

He didn't know that by that act of mercy he was laying up mercy for himself at a future day.

"Go!" he cried to the kneeling boy, with a wave of his hand to the shrub-clad hills.

One faint, plaintive exclamation of gratitude, one quick pressure of the crossed hands to the dusky bosom, and the lithe figure of the Indian boy bounded swiftly away toward the cover.

"I was a blamed fool to do it," said Terry, half-regretfully. "But he's such a young critter, and maybe that'll be a lesson to him. He may have a chance to act just as foolish some time."

He was summoned from his reverie by the thundering voice of Nilo, and he went toward him. He met the mysterious personage with the bear-skin over one arm, while the other was twined in the long hair of three dangling human heads, the sight of which made Terry shrink in horror.

"Yah! yah!" laughed Nilo, holding up the fearful tro-

phies. "Dat's Black Eagle's kind o' fight. H'yar's more medicine for fetish an' obeah."

"What do you want with them?" asked Terry, with a shudder. "Where are you going to take them?"

"To de nest ob de Black Eagle—to Nilo's cave ob Obi. Ho! ho! Dey won't look so odd dar. Dar's plenty more. Nilo sends de Nabbahoes to de happy-huntin' grounds wid-out dar heads. Ho! ho! what jolly sport dey'll hab. You'll see 'em chile, you'll see 'em."

"I?"

"Yes, chile, you'se gwan wid Nilo to de cave ob Obi."

"I'm going to no such place," said Terry, blustering to hide the fear that fell upon him. "I am going to my folks as fast as hoofs can carry me."

"You'se gwan wi' me, boy. I sabad ye from de water an' de Injuns. You're mine. You belong to Nilo, an' he needs you at de cave."

"I belong to nobody but myself, and you sha'n't get me to your cave!" cried Terry, spunkily, clutching his rifle in the very desperation of the fear caused by the words of the monster.

With a growl of rage, Nilo dropped the bloody heads upon the sward, and by a quick movement cast the heavy bear-skin around the boy's head at the same time dashing forward and wresting the rifle from his grasp.

"You debblish fool!" he said, in a hoarse, angry tone. "Does ye think ye can fight agin Nilo's power. Does you think ye is stronger dan fetish an' obeah?"

As he spoke he threw the smothering bear-skin aside, and grasped the top of the boy's skull tightly in his powerful hand, bending back the head so that the blue eyes were upturned to his own glaring black ones.

A shudder shook him. All bright colors disappeared. Darkness came and the last sounds he heard were the fearful tones of Nilo, saying:

"You won't go to de Cave ob Obi? Won't ye? Yah! yah!"

CHAPTER IV.

TO THE RESCUE.

The reason of the smallness of the party that ultimately closed in upon Terry Terrill and were so terribly defeated, was that the mass of the Navahoes and their allies were so certain of death or capture of the boy raider that they turned their whole attention to the recovery of the stock he had stampeded.

Terry's adventure had raised trouble among the horse-proud young bucks of the Navahoes.

The wealth or importance of a Navahoe is determined by the number of horses he can corral. His mental or moral qualifications may be of the meanest order; but if his horse stock is extensive, he takes rank accordingly.

Whenever his dusky heart is warmed by the gentle flame, he never thinks of hair-oiling or scenting, or dandifying, or sighing, as means to gain the object of his passion. No. He simply prepares an inventory of his horse-wealth, and lays it before the beloved one and her people. If it compares favorably with other estimates the maiden smiles and the father grunts (beg pardon—grants) consent. If not the smitten brave goes forth to steal more horses in order to eclipse his rivals, and deserve the fair one.

So, many a tough epithet took the place of tender expression in the mouths of the Navahoe beaux at the upsetting of their plans by the action of the audacious Terry.

Meantime Terry's reckless raid was the cause of great trouble in another direction.

Dad Gray, with all his seeming apathy and coldness, was possessed of a very kind heart. His fiery days were past—but he admired fire in others younger than himself, and he was especially proud of this quality in Terry Terrill's character.

He had laughed at Terry's shrewd, though mad-capped idea of getting revenge on the Navahoes for the destruction of the ranch by striking them in their tender spot—their horse wealth.

"Blamed cute, the youngster," said the old man, with a chuckle. "Knows things most better'n I do. But I l'arned him—I l'arned him, and—he'll do."

The necessity of getting some shelter up to replace their

burned cabins took their immediate attention. There was little thought about Terry after he departed, for all were used to his wild ways, and all had confidence in his ability to take care of himself; but when the storm, already described, broke forth, and the old man and his co-mates were driven to such shelter as they could find, reflection set in bad, and every gust, and flash, and rumble brought anxious thoughts of the wayward Terry.

"Boys," said Dad Gray, as they took their scanty breakfast, "this suspense business is all played out. If somethin' hadn't 'a happened, we'd 'a heard somethin'."

"What's to be done, dad?"

"I'm afraid that Terry's run his head too far into the hornet's nest, and that these varmints have got their clutches on him, or something worse."

"Well, dad?"

"Well," said the old veteran, stretching his sturdy form, as if to test the condition of his sinews, "I'm a-going for that boy, an', if he ain't thar, I'm a-going for them catawampusses."

His words were approved by the men, who felt that any kind of a "racket" was preferable to working at the rather hopeless and spiteful task of re-establishing their humble cabins. Besides, revenge is sweet, and the most unsanguinary of them felt his trigger finger itch when he thought of the savages who had left him shelterless.

It took little time or trouble for men who were always on the qui vive for emergencies to prepare for this mission, and before the sun had risen next morning they started out from their desolated and cheerless quarters in search of the hidden haunts of the Navahoes, in some one of which they felt assured that Terry was held a prisoner, if he was in the land of the living at all.

It was the most natural thing in the world for their thoughts to turn to the Canon Chelly, and thitherward they wended their way.

CHAPTER V.

NILO—THE "FETISH" MAN.

Terry recovered from the strange influence cast upon him by the Ethiopian giant, and found that he was being borne along the bottom of the ravine in the arms of that startlingly strange being, his faithful little horse following closely behind them.

The captor, or whatever we may call him, did not seem the least distressed by his burden. He bore the sturdy youth as easily as a nursemaid does an infant, and this fact rather hurt the pride of Terry. He felt himself too much of a man to be "toted" around like a pappoose.

"Let me down," he said, sharply. "I have legs to walk with."

"But mind ye, chile, not to try to run away wid," responded Nilo, with a laugh, as he stood his prisoner on his feet. "Ye needn't look at your pony—he'm got load enough a'ready. Yah! yah!"

Terry saw with a feeling of horror and disgust that the sable savage had pressed Nimblefoot also into his service by making him bearer of the ghastly heads, which, fastened together by the long hair, hung at either side of the saddle. The sight sent a thrill of repugnance through Terry's body, and he started toward the insulted animal to relieve him of the grisly burden.

"Whar's ye gwine? What's ye gwine to do?" asked Nilo, with threatening calmness.

"I am going to free my horse from this carrion," was Terry's passionate answer. "What right have you or any other man to use him so? He is mine. What right have you to interfere with him or me?"

"What right, boy?" he said. "Nilo makes his own right. His right is de power of fetish and obeah. He is a magic man. What right hab de Nabbahoes to chase you? What right hab Nilo to sabe you and chase dem? De power—de power. Yah! yah!"

There is no denying that the feeling of fear of this strange being which possessed Terry, increased the longer he was in his company, and the more he noted his wild manner.

"I am sure I am very thankful to you for the aid you have given me," he said, edging slowly toward his horse, "and I hope to return the favor, or at least reward you at

some time for your services in my need; but I have dear friends who are expecting me and so——"

"You talk too much, and waste de time!" exclaimed Nilo, impatiently. "Come 'long! Your fren's may go to de debbil for Nilo."

"Then Nilo may go the same way for me!" cried Terry, suddenly dashing to his horse, and vaulting into the saddle, he cast the gory heads to the ground and seized the bridle. "Go it, Nimble! go it!" he exclaimed, excitedly, hitting the pet beast harder than he had ever done before.

His cry was echoed by a growling yell of rage from Nilo, and, as the fiery little steed dashed off in obedience to its master's word, the eccentric savage stretched out his hands, clutching at the air, and calling some gibberish loudly out.

Then, strange to relate, Terry, though rapidly increasing the distance between him and the sable conjurer, felt the influence of a mysterious power—fetish, obeah, mesmerism, or whatever it might be which had before subdued him.

His brain reeled, his eye-sight became defective, and objects near and distant whirled and danced before him.

He could not see his way, and of necessity left the course of escape to the instinct of his horse, on whom the Ethiopian incantation seemed to have no effect.

But the charm, though not so quick in its effect on Terry, was not less sure. At every bound the surrounding objects became more indistinct and misty, and at last a dark stupor fell on the youth, accompanied by a smothering sensation.

He gasped for breath. He swayed to and fro in his saddle. He clutched at his horse's mane, and in that wild endeavor lost his seat, still, however, retaining his desperate clutch on the bridle and mane, and horse and rider were hurled heavily to the ground.

The last sounds he heard were the everlasting mocking intonations of Nilo's "Yah! yah!"

* * * * *

"Where am I?" he cried, when he awoke from the strange lethargy into which he had been thrown.

Deep darkness and a heavy fetid atmosphere surrounded him, giving a horrifying idea of a charnel vault.

His heart sank with awe, and his flesh crept with that feeling of loathing which is caused by the touch of a reptile.

He was destined to feel in reality the hateful contact that his mind suggested.

Silky whisperings came from the darkness around him. At first he thought them but the fancies of his overstrained hearing, but they continued and increased, coming from different directions.

Occasionally a slight hiss was heard, and his blood ran cold as he came to the conclusion that he was confined in some mountain cave, the crevices of which were infested by snakes.

At last he feels their loathsome touch.

He is lying prostrate, and the hateful things crawl up on his body and coil themselves. Others are huddling in at his sides.

Horror and disgust have hitherto kept him motionless and silent, but, as he recognizes by their very actions that these are only the poisonless brown snakes that live in the rock clefts, seeking his body merely for warmth, he moves all he can, and cries aloud to frighten them.

The effect was instantaneous. With a "swish" like a gust of wind, the whole affectionate brood of crawlers sought their various holes, and Terry gave a shiver of relief as the sounds of reptile retreat died away.

But these sounds were followed by others, which, if not so unpleasant, were at least as surprising.

Seeming to come through the solid rock itself, the sweet notes of a feminine voice came to his ear in the words of a plaintive song that gained mournfulness even from the rocky muffling of the melody.

Terry's heart took a feverish beat.

Where was he? Into what strange fairy-land had he been thrown? How could the utterer of such melodious sounds be resident in the horrid place in which he found himself, except by the compulsion of enchantment?

Here a new thought awoke. Was he himself enchanted, or was he crazed by the spells of the negro wizard whose companionship he recalled with a shudder.

He began to recall the yarns he had heard of mermaids, and wood-nymphs, and fairies, and so forth, with the soft, sweet tones still sounding in his ears, until he began to feel as deliciously drowsy as if all the snakes had again come out of their crevices to charm him into insensibility.

The effect is arrested by the low rumble of a deep voice, which he recognizes by its peculiar guttural intonation as that of Nilo, his Ethiopian captor.

"Sing de odder—de odder," it said, in a gruff, though melancholy manner.

It was not enchantment, then; there were living people near him, thought Terry Terrill, and he listened, to determine from which direction the sounds came, for the reverberation of the vault or cave in which he lay made that point very doubtful.

After a pause the female voice was heard again, beginning very low and plaintively, but gradually swelling into a wild, wailing song, which was accompanied by the lugubrious mumblings of Nilo, which sometimes sounded like the moanings of a wounded wolf.

CHAPTER VI.

A MEETING—IN JEOPARDY.

The continuance of the song, or, at least Terry's hearing of it, was interrupted by a strange, shuffling, groping sounds of some one or something near where the youthful prisoner lay.

Terry cocked his ears and listened. Was it a bear or panther, he asked himself?

He had already had the luxurious pleasure of snake visits, and now he was nearly prepared to remain unastonished, even if a whole menagerie marched in.

But, hush! What was that? Not the snuffing of a beast, certainly. No, it is surely the cautiously whispered tone of a human voice.

Terry's heart beat fast. This unseen person could not be a denizen of the place, or why such extreme caution?

There must be more than one or why talk?

If so, were they friends or foes?

He held his breath to listen. That they were not Indian tones he soon became satisfied, and a dim hope arose within him that the time of his deliverance from this weird thrall-dom had come.

Nearer and nearer came the groping sounds, and at last Terry could almost feel the intruder brushing against him as he passed.

"Be my word, it's better than the out air, at any rate, and there can't be a bad kind o' diviltry where there's a petticoated song-bird in it. Though, be my word, they're mischievous enough, sometimes. But, in the name o' Pontius Pilate, where's the hall-door?"

Terry could hardly believe his ears. At first the heavy atmosphere of the place deadened and changed the whispered tones, but the phraseology alone convinced him that it was Paddy the Whistler, escaped, like himself, from a watery grave.

"Paddy!" he whispered, cautiously, for he heard the heavy tones of Nilo's voice rumbling beyond whatever sonorous rock wall separated them.

The groper in the dark gave an unmistakable start, and uttered a fervent religious ejaculation, following it up immediately by an ejaculation of a totally different order.

"What fairy, phooka, or laprechaun among ye has the impudence to address a man by his given name at first sight, when bad scran to the sight o' him ye've had at all, at all?"

"It's me, Paddy, Terry Terrill."

"What, Terry!" exclaimed the groper, stopping short and turning in the direction of the voice that addressed him. "Is it you that's in this satanic eel-pot, too? Where are you, avick? I was afeared, be my word, that you were taking a scientific submarine survey of the bottom of the Chelly 'fore this, and glad I am to know you're not so enterprising as I thought you were."

"I thought the same about you," answered Terry, "and I'm very glad I was mistaken. I can't tell how glad, Paddy."

"Then niver thry to do what you know you can't do, and you'll save yerself a hape of mortification, not to spake

o' the botheration," said Paddy, feeling the way toward his young comrade. "Give us your fist as soon as convenient, and let us be unhappy together, for, by the beef of Mullingar my stomach's as full of emptiness as a drum. Whatever little there was in it was clane washed out by the blaggard water during my plasing excursion down the stream. Where in the name of the O'Mahoneys are you, at all?"

"Here," said Terry.

"Give's your fist then, for, although I know you to be a teller of the truth, your voice at the present speakin' sounds as if you were lying."

"I can't move my hands," answered Terry. "I don't know whether they are tied or not—perhaps I am still under the charm."

"Charm! by my soul this is a charming place to talk of charms. What brought you here?"

"Old Nick himself, I believe, and we'd better speak low or he'll hear us," said Terry, warningly.

Paddy, who was feeling on the wall above him, displaced something hung there, and it fell on the face of the prostrate youth with a sickening plash.

"Take them away—take them away, Paddy, for goodness sake," he exclaimed, in a low, horrified tone, at the same time writhing in the vain endeavor to change his position.

"What are they? What is it, Terry, jewel?"

"Scalps! Fresh, reeking scalps!" said the boy, with a shudder. "I can have the heart to kill, Paddy, but not to have the blood smeared on my lips."

"Wait, Terry, boy," said the Irishman. "This fighting the devil in the dark is not the ticket. My water-proofs are safe. I'll strike a light."

Before Terry's remonstrance could be heard there was a slight "scritch," and the walls of the cavern were illuminated by the blue gleam of a Lindsay match. This pale light was too weak to reveal much, but by its glimmer Paddy caught sight of a large concave stone in the center on which pieces of wood were piled in the form of a pyramid bonfire with pitch splints at the base ready for the appliance of the match.

"Ha! be my word as a gintleman and a judge o' potheen," exclaimed Paddy, as this met his gaze. "The landlord, ould Clootie, is not so unmindful of his guests, after all. Behold ye, there's everything in tip-top order for an illigant house-warming. More power to ye, Beelzebub."

At the word he touched the match, and the pile blazed up with unexpected suddenness, lighting the place with an angry glare, and showing its adornments in all their ghastliness.

Around the walls, slimy with drippings from the higher rocks, were ranged in the manner of trophies, bleached skulls grinning horribly down on the beholders, with borders of other human bones.

Clusters of arms gleamed here and there, and at one side—that at which Terry Terrill lay, the fresh gory heads of those slain the day before were suspended.

Mystic instruments were scattered here and there. Some of these were rude instruments of music, such as the untamed inhabitants of Africa use, and others whose purpose or use the beholders could not even guess.

"By Paddy's poker," exclaimed the astonished Irishman, as he hastened to the assistance of his young comrade. "This bangs Bannagher. The devil such a curiosity-shop I'd iver have expected to come across in the Chelly hills. Be gob, it's a nate place for the butcher business."

"Release me," said Terry, impatiently, for the reeking blood was congealing on his face.

"He was kind and dacint toward ye, at all events," said Paddy, as he knelt beside his friend, and proceeded to undo his thongs. "It's with strips of flesh hide he bound you, and that's the raison why you didn't know whether you were bound or not."

"Haste—haste, Paddy," said Terry, with a feverishness unusual to him. "The sounds have ceased inside—and I fear trouble."

"Inside? Where's inside?" asked Paddy, staring around the apparently solid walls in which only the narrow aperture that gave him entrance was visible.

"I do not know," answered Terry, impatiently, "where

the singing came from. Hurry! you haven't felt his power as I have."

The vaulted space rang with a horrid laugh of mockery, and, as if springing from the solid rock itself, the Black Eagle stood before them in all his gigantic ugliness.

"But he will feel it!" he roared, in hoarse, fierce merriment. "He hab lit de fetish fire in de Cave of Obi, and he must roast upon it. Yah! yah! Nilo will smell his blood."

CHAPTER VII.

AT THE SCENE OF CARNAGE.

Old Gray and his party entered on no light or pleasant task when they undertook to explore the intricate and dangerous defiles of the Canon Chelly in search of Terry Terril.

But it was a labor of love, and all the incidental hardships were unflinchingly encountered and bravely overcome.

"The lad 's the younger brother of one and all of you," the old man said, "and he's my adopted child—my own natural flesh and blood could not be dearer to me—and he shall not be left to make an Indian barbecue without a tarnal strong effort to save him. Eh, boys?"

"Nary a time," was the enthusiastic response. "There's the talk, old man. Our sentiments exactly. That boy must be rekivered or the 'Patchy hills 'll howl for it!"

"I knew your mettle, fellers," said Gray, with some show of feeling, and if I am old and stiffish myself I feel sure of success with a band of lads like you at my back. Hello! What's here? I declare to Josaphat, thar's been a muss, and a tough un, too!"

The veteran pioneer, while speaking of the purpose of their mission, had pushed ahead of his comrades and come opposite the mouth of the gully or ravine which had been the scene of the fight between Nilo and the mixed band of Navahoes and Mexicans.

The remains of the sable giant's victims lay ghastly in the sunlight, and the stakes and crosses torn from the desecrated burial-ground were strewn around clotted with blood.

"It ain't no white man's job, nor redskin's, either," cried Gray, excitedly, from where he had dismounted, and was leaning over the bodies.

"What do you mean? Do you know whose it is?"

"Too well—too well," said the veteran, with pathos, "it brings before my old eyes bloody scenes of long ago, and stirs up my memories of my missing girl."

"What do you mean, Dad? What have these headless loafers to do with the past you speak of?"

"Everything! Everything!" exclaimed Gray, excitedly. "Before you, you see the handiwork of neither white man, nor yet redskin!"

"How?"

"It is the carving of the devil! The Black Eagle of the Apache. I know his knife-work too well—too well!"

"The Black Eagle!" exclaimed the listeners, in very various tones.

Some spoke incredulously, as if half-inclined to laugh at the name of the mysterious personage, whom they regarded as a myth. Others, both by tone and manner, expressed their belief and awe of the hero of so many wild legends, and seemed inclined to fly in terror from the scene of his bloody visitation.

"Let us go, Dad," said one of the latter in a timid tone. "I'd a darned sight rather meet them fellows alive than lookin' like that."

"You can go your ways—I am determined to go mine," said the old man, doggedly, moving away from them. "I've watched long, and now I'll see it out."

"But listen, Dad—"

"I am listening!" the old man exclaimed, wildly, as he strained both eye and ear up the glen. "I am listening to the pleading voice of my child—my darling girl. I hear it in my ears calling my name—but hush!—I can't make out whether it comes from the lips of the living or the lips of the dead. It only says: 'Father! father! come to me—I am so lonely.'"

The effect of this wild rhapsody upon the bystanders was strange.

It made them all believe that the old man was going mad, but they assigned it to different causes.

"This butchery didn't come from drunken fighting," continued the old man, in an earnest argumentative manner. "There are Indians here as well as 'Greasers' and 'Easters,' and even whisky wouldn't make these vultures pluck out each others' eyes. No, comrades, it must have been the Black Eagle and no other. I know his tracks—I have seen them to my sorrow—long, long ago. Yet—yet, boys, I do not mean that I believe he wronged me or mine. No, no! There was proof against that idea."

"What proof?" said one of the men, his motive being rather to fill the pause of the speaker than to gain any information from his incoherency.

"Proof that he was the foe of the red and yellow skins, but not of the white—not of the white. No—no—after the attack on my cabin, when I came to my senses after a hatchet blow that left me for dead—they were lying around me yellow and red—stark dead and headless as they are here, and the white corpses that the Indians had not time to cut, all wore their heads and hair. But I'm away!"

"For what purpose?"

"My girl was taken on that dreadful night—I searched among the dead for her darling body, but could not find it. At the time I thought that the sight of my favorite safe in death would have comforted me, but I could not see it, and then my mind changed, and I thanked Heaven that she was alive—that I might at some time see her again. She was then but an infant, and even a savage could not have harmed the prattling innocent; but now—my God! she must be near to womanhood if she's alive at all—she may be in need of my protection while I stand prating here. This Black Eagle, be he man or devil, either has the child in his power, or can tell me of her whereabouts—her fate."

As if suddenly spurred on by this thought, the old man started away up the ravine before his companions could stay his course, but he had barely passed the third of the huts before mentioned when he suddenly pulled in and threw up his hands with an exclamation of astonishment:

"Gracious Heaven! what does that mean?"

CHAPTER VIII.

A STRANGE ACQUAINTANCE.

With expressions of curiosity and surprise the party pressed on toward their aged leader, some of them, it must be confessed, in fear and trembling.

Arriving at a point that afforded them a view of the object of the old man's interest their surprise was increased by their seeing before them at a short distance, strongly illuminated by the bright sunlight, an oddly attired human figure stooping over something at its feet.

The first superstitious ideas were dissipated when it was noted that the side face was that of a sallow complexioned or weather-bronzed white man. Long yellow hair flowed around his shoulders, and was gently wafted to and fro by the breeze. A battered hat of eccentric architecture and doubtful color, which looked as if it might have braved the battle and the breeze for a wilderness of years crowned the cranium of the stranger, and a coat a world too small rendered stooping a somewhat trying job.

But it was his actions rather than his appearance that riveted the attention of old Gray and his party.

He was so preoccupied that he had not noted their presence yet, notwithstanding their numbers, but continued his painful looking stooping posture, and seemed to be carving at something on the ground.

"That seed's not much used to Apache land," said one of the men, "or he'd sling his peepers about him a little more."

"Yes, by golly, Jack," said a comrade. "He behaves and looks jest like a dry-goods drummer on a down-east pumpkin farm."

"But what is the critter doin', any how? Hello! What was that?"

"It were the flash of a knife."

"And look what he's a-holdin' up and straightening out!"

"It's ha'r, by Jonathan!"

"Yes, he's scalpin' some one."

"Let's go for him and inspect his sailing papers."

"Nuff said."

Old Gray was already off toward the mysterious stranger at a rapid gait, and that person, awakened from his pre-occupation by the sound of the approaching hoofs, erected his unique figure and stood calmly awaiting the threatened interview.

In one hand he held a glittering bowie-knife, in the other the long, glossy black hair just severed from the corpse of an Indian at his foot.

We need hardly inform the reader that this was the body of one of the three Indians shot by Terry during the fight and left in possession of its head, owing to Nilo's impatience to secure the boy as a prisoner.

"Why, heow do ye do, strangers?" said the scalper, as the party advanced. "Bein' that yer white's, I am powerful glad to see you—'pon my soul I am—for its all-fired dull in this confounded wilderness—'specially when you're lost—not a neighbor to speak too—nothing but defunct Injuns like these to amuse a feller's self with."

"You seem to enjoy their company pretty well," said old Gray, grimly.

"Why not, stranger, why not? I couldn't do otherwise, sir. It's the artistic enthusiasm within me that enables me to overcome the narrow-waisted idees of civilization, sir."

The men looked at him in amused surprise, for as he spoke of his artistic enthusiasm he slapped the reeking scalp he held against his breast and gave his bowie-knife a flourish that was truly theatrical.

"It's rather an odd style of civilized art, young man, that imitates the brutality of the savages," said Gray, severely, pointing to the skull of the prostrate Indian from which the entire scalp had been stripped as neatly as if it had been a wig.

"And what air the matter with the art displayed in the execution of that 'ere job, sir? That's what I want to know, sir," said the stranger, putting his foot irreverently on the gory skull which he had just despoiled. "Nothin', sir; nothin' but ignorance, prejudice, or professional envy would presume to find fault with the artistic operation of Cyrus Root. At your service, sir, I am Cyrus Root. I desire you, sir, to satisfy yourself by visiting the fashionable quarters of London—the boulevards of Paris—the strausses of Vienna, and the emporiums of our own great and grand country, and you will discover that where human hair is worked or worn you will find the name of Cyrus Root ranked with those of the noblest hirsutists of the age!"

Some of the men laughed at the pomposity of his style, but he only rebuked them with a look, and proceeded coolly to scalp another of the unfortunate warriors.

There was something so ludicrous about the consequential being that the repulsiveness of his actions was lessened.

"You see. There she is, as slick as a whistle," he said, proudly, as he deftly whipped the scalp from the dead man and held it aloft. "Can you find any one around these benighted diggings that can ekal that, mister? I came acrost several real fine carcasses back here a bit, but some bungling encroacher on the ha'r bizness had cut the heads off of 'em as well as the ha'r. Most like some phrenologer feller that wants to make use of the skulls as well as the wool. Ha! ha!"

"Then you're a hair-dresser?"

"No, siree. I'm a ha'r merchant, I am. Jest returning from California with a prime stock o' pigtails that I bought from the Chinamen and women at reasonable rates. Thar they air—they packs is full o' celestial tresses."

He pointed to a clump of shrubbery, and the party saw for the first time a pony and a mule laden with packs, browsing on the leaves and tender shoots.

"But how did you come here? It is rather a dangerous quarter for a commercial man to travel single handed."

"Was on the road for Santa Fe with a wagon and mule train—lost my company—tried to find Washington Pass alone—but couldn't. I really b'lieve if Washington hisself was to come from the grave a purpose he couldn't diskiver the darned thing."

"You're a long way from Washington Pass, now."

"I reckon yer right, stranger, but I came acrost such

nice little takes o' ha'r to be had for the takin', free gratis, for nothin', without any charges, that I forgot all about the cussed pass, and have wandered around until I'm as mixed as sausage meat as to whar I am or where I'm gwine. Praps you'd set us on the track."

"We would gladly if we were on our way back, but at present we are on an expedition which we cannot give up."

"Ha'r huntin'?" said Cyrus Root, with professional eagerness.

"Well, not exactly," said old Gray, with a smile, "though a considerable quantity of that commodity may change hands before we get back."

"Bully for you, old hoss," cried Cyrus Root, shaking the old man's hand enthusiastically. "By gum, I suspicioned from the first moment I sot eyes on to you that you was in the business. Was it you sawed the heads off of the bucks below?"

"No. But we are going in search of the person that did, and if you like to come along you can have all the hair upon those heads in case we should recover them."

"Nuff said, giniral, I'm yer chip-munk."

"There's many a wise thing said in jest, young man," said Gray, seriously. "But, come, men, we must get forward. We've lost time enough already. Do you think of going with us, sir?"

"Going! Of course I am. Going like a bunch of fire-crackers. Come, Nip! come, Nibble!"

The two pack-laden beasts of the hair speculator walked obediently out to their master, snuffing at the dead Indians as they passed, and the voluble tongued Cyrus vaulted lightly on the pony's back.

"Ours is like to be a rough scout, friend," said old Gray; "but you will be in no more danger with a crowd than you would be wandering the ravines alone."

"All right, giniral," was th cheery answer. "Cyrus Root ain't grumblin' for a cent. On the contrary, I'm right proud to be one of your company."

Continuing for some distance up the ravine, which became more rugged and difficult at every yard, they found the soil which enabled them to follow the trail become more and more scant, until at last it ceased altogether, and only the bare uncommunicable rock met their view.

Disappointment rested on every face but Root's; he seemed to care little where he was, and in ranging his eyes over the surroundings, probably in search of more hair for his stock, he discovered what the others had missed.

"Thar, giniral," he cried, pointing, "what do you call that? Is it an ourang-outang or an Injun?"

"It is an Indian," said Gray, after using a small spy-glass. "He is waving a peeled branch—it is the sign of peace. He has news for us."

They pressed forward as well as they could to hasten the meeting, and at last the Indian boy, whose life had been spared by Terry, bounded down and leaning breathlessly on the neck of Gray's horse, gasped in broken English:

"Boy Terry! Brave with much laugh! Both—Black Eagle's—cave in rocks—come!"

CHAPTER IX.

IN THE EAGLE'S TALONS.

We left Terry Terrill and Paddy the Whistler prisoners in the mysterious cave of Nilo, the former bound, and the latter dazed and astonished, about to undergo the resentment of the negro giant for the crime of having lit the magic fire.

"De flames ob de fetish fire will curl de flesh from your bones, and lick up your heart's blood!" cried the monster, with an angry laugh that made his wild abode shake as if with subterranean thunder. "Come, sar, you must roast! Yah! yah!"

With the words he sprang toward his intended victim, rolling up his sleeves as he did so for the more convenient exercise of the rites of sacrifice.

"Spare him! for Heaven sake, spare him, Nilo!" exclaimed Terry, appealingly, as he saw the danger in which his friend stood.

The negro stopped suddenly short, as though he had been stricken by electricity, or had heard a voice from the grave. His big eyes opened wide, glistening like onions, and his great muscular neck stretched forward in a listen-

ing attitude. A clammy sweat seemed to ooze out on his dusky skin, and an expression of puzzlement and fear took the place of his angry frown.

"Hist! What was dat dar?" he said, in a deep whisper, as if inquiring of the shadows of the den, which wafted wildly under the influence of the leaping flame. "What could it be but him? Him! He's dead! Yah! yah! Dead! dead! Nilo, dead! and you'se left alone, alone, alone."

The deep wailing tone in which the last repeated word was uttered reverberated from the rocky roof with curious effect, which Terry noticed, but he was still more astonished when he heard the word repeated in a softer, sweeter, more mournful tone.

He started, and so did the negro.

It might have been an effect of the echoing capacity of the cave, but what could cause the mellow, plaintive alteration of tone?

Terry had indistinctly caught such a repetition when his own appeal for mercy broke forth, but his fears for the fate of Paddy hindered him from analyzing it.

"It is strange," he thought. "In an open echo such a change of sound might be, but not in such a cramped up place as this. Ha! I have it—the singer I heard—the voice that seemed to come through the rocks."

"Through the rocks," repeated the mysterious voice, for the boy prisoner had unconsciously spoken these words aloud.

"It am fetish—it am Obeah!" said the black central figure of the weird scene in a husky whisper, and the voice whispered back:

"It is Obeah!"

Terry's quick ear detected the change in the words—the substitution of the word "is" for "am"—the absence of the negro accent and the presence of another one, imperfect, indeed, but entirely different.

His bewilderment and his thoughts of the hidden singer returned, but the behavior of the negro proprietor of this subterranean home of enchantment caused his doubt and wonder.

If it was, indeed, the singer, why should Nilo seem at such a loss to account for these tantalizing reiterations of his own words?

His wonder was unmistakable, and even mixed with fear or awe, and his savage-looking eyes ranged around the smoke-blackened vault with its ghastly trophies, as if he fully expected to see the jaws of some of the grisly skulls move in articulation.

Terry was afraid that from this unaccountable excitement some new freak of madness would seize upon the untamed Nilo, and still more endanger his friend, and he hastened, as he hoped, to divert the course of his thoughts.

"It was only the echo of my voice," he began.

"Of my voice," repeated the echo, or whatever it was, with unmistakable emphasis.

"Whish!" said Nilo, motioning with his hand to silence his youthful prisoner. "Whish, boy! Dat voice was nebber yours. Nebber in de wide world—nebber. It is de voice ob de spirits ob de dead a talkin' to Nilo, an' callin' on him for revenge on de Irish dog dat woke dem from dar graves by lightin' de fetish fire."

"No, no," cried the boy, "'twas I that cried out for you to spare him."

"Spare him!" wailed the echo.

"Spare him. Yah, yah," laughed the giant, in a crazy manner, and the sounds were faithfully repeated in the same dissimilar tones. "Nilo will spare him—he will make him into spare ribs. Yah, yah."

"Spare ribs. Yah, yah."

But if the negro sacrificer thought he was going to have an easy job in dissecting Paddy he was never more mistaken in his life.

The worthy Hibernian seemed to be well pleased with the existing arrangement of his anatomy, and entertained strong objections to dismemberment.

Nilo, having worked himself into a mystic state of excitement, seized a large, curiously shaped war-club and made toward the Irishman, as if bent on his instant demolishment.

Terry's heart beat as he saw the savage onslaught, for

he felt sure that the doom of his light-hearted companion was sealed, and he so powerless to aid him.

On dashed Nilo like some wild demon, with flashing eyes and glistening teeth.

Already the deadly club was whirling for the blow, when Paddy, desperately seizing one of the skulls from the wall, whirled it around his head and sent it flying at his assailant with the strength and precision of a practiced slinger.

It struck Nilo on the forehead with stunning force, causing him to utter a beast-like roar and stagger backward through the mystic fire over which he had raised such a fuss, scattering the blazing brands in every direction.

So powerful was the blow that it would have brained an ordinary mortal, but Niblo's Ethiopian thickness of skull lessened its effect to a rather solid fall.

"Hooray for our side. County Kerry heard from. First knock down for the land o' praties. Take a little toast yerself, my beauty, before you help your neighbors. Spare ribs is it ye'd be after makin' out of me, no less, as if I was a porker instead of a Christian. By the Cove o' Cork, but yer a fine smoked specimen of iniquity. I've a mighty mind to play the drum on your big carcass with the toes of my brogues."

While speaking he was rapidly releasing Terry from his bondage.

"There now, *ma bouchil*, on to yer feet wid ye, and let's see if we can find a passage out of this devil's den. Bad manners to the bit of notion I have how I got into it more than a fly in a fly trap. It's worth patenting, so it is."

"Let us get away before he recovers," said Terry, pointing to where the stunned giant lay, breathing heavily.

"Enough said," replied Paddy, in the same cautious tone, "get yerself a torch and help to find the passage way. We'll lave the beautiful brunette alone to his devotions."

Each picked up a blazing brand, and supplying themselves with weapons from the plentiful supply scattered around, they started to explore the blackened-decorated walls of their prison house.

For some time the silence was only broken by the sound of their stealthy, cat-like movements, but at last the Irishman forgot his cautiousness, and called in joyous tones:

"Here we are, Terry, my jewel—here's our passage to the light of day and dacency. Come quick."

Terry sprang to the speaker's side with joyful alacrity, and found himself before a dark crevice in the rock through which it would seem impossible for a full-grown man to squeeze himself.

"This can't be——" commenced Terry, who remembered that he had been carried into this dungeon by the Herculean Nilo himself.

"Oh, yes, it can, Terry darlin'. Shure my stomach and the small o' my back are plowed in furrows in scrougin' through the confounded place."

"Well, well," said Terry, impatiently, "there is no time to debate. Let's explore it. We may better ourselves, but can't be worse."

"Come, then, come," said Paddy.

"Come," sounded startlingly from the passage, in the same voice which had so affected Nilo.

Both ceased to advance, and stood rooted to the ground peering forward into the darkness.

On their eyes becoming accustomed to the semi-gloom they discovered before them by the combined light of the brands they held a wild human face.

Terry raised the hatchet which he had appropriated, and was about to hurl it at the figure, but Paddy restrained him.

"Hould yer hand, ye gawk," he cried. "Don't ye know that if it had been an inimy with sich an advantage of the light, he'd 'a' splattered us, like woodcocks before this time."

"You are right, Paddy. Stranger, speak, who are you?"

"Advance and give the countersign. Where do you hang your hammock, and what's the name upon yer sign board?"

"Friend," was the low curt response, as the party stepped forward into the light.

CHAPTER X.

A SLIP 'TWIXT CUP AND LIP—DANGER.

A youthful figure and a handsome face met the gaze of Terry and his companion as the stranger stood before them. Terry started, for he had a faint remembrance of both face and figure, but he could not exactly locate them.

"You! I am sure I have seen you before," he said.

"The young brave spared the life of Osta," said the Indian youth, "when he fought with Black Eagle. Osta wishes to pay him by leading him to life. Come."

"Yes, come," said Paddy, with brisk impatience, "this is no place to pow-wow or palaver. Wait with your gossip till we get out of the reach of fetish and Obeah, as his nays-gership calls it."

As if the mysterious names had been words of might, at their utterance a deafening clang rang though the vault, and a glimpse showed them Nilo, in a kneeling position, in the act of repeating his blow on a sonorous plate of metal, which hung against the rocky wall.

It needed no second blow, however, to effect the purpose of the subtle savage.

With a combined roar like wild animals broke loose from a menagerie cage, three stalwart black men, very nearly counterparts of the giant Nilo himself, burst into sight from goodness knows where in the same sudden and mysterious manner as their leader had appeared in.

"Kill! Kill! Kill!" cried Nilo, gutturally, as he sank to a sitting posture to watch the progress of the pleasing process.

The executioners bounded eagerly on their victims, and the wild beast idea was again conjured up by their blood-thirsty manner.

But they were doomed to disappointment.

A light, graceful female figure sprang from the darkness, and throwing herself between them and the imperilled prisoners held her little hands up protectingly, and said in a most musical, but firm and authoritative voice:

"Throw down your knives. You shall not harm them while Leila lives."

The desperadoes, or demons, whichever they were, fell back and let their upraised knives fall jingling on the rocky floor.

The sound aroused Nilo from the semi-stupor consequent upon the shock he had received, and, with an endeavor to rise, he cried angrily:

"Why d'ye stand when Nilo says forward? Sheep hearts, is you afeard o' a fool and a boy?"

"No," answered the grim trio, "we're afeard o' you an' her."

Terry had already recognized the voice as that of the unseen singer, and looking at her frail, graceful figure he could not help wondering at the fear she seemed to inspire in the demoniac-looking creatures of Nilo.

"Am it you, Leila?" said Nilo, hoarsely, as the girl stood revealed before him.

"Yes, it is your Leila," she said, and a thrill somewhat akin to abhorrence struck the heart of our young adventurer at hearing this acknowledgment of association between the middle-aged monster and the youthful beauty.

Her figure was the perfection of young grace—graceful as a willow branch wafted by the breeze—and her face was astonishingly regular and of the pure Caucasian type, for, although nearly as black as Nilo himself in complexion, there was not a vestige of negro character in either voice, form, or features.

"What brought you here, chile?" said Nilo, with an assumption of severity which was easily seen through. "What d'ye meddle wid my commands for?"

"For mercy's sake," she said, sinking down on the ground beside him and taking his mammoth paw caressingly in hers. "Because you are angry, Nilo, and would be sorry afterward if you killed these people."

"Why sorry, wench?"

"Because you would have no more Leila here to sing to you when you were sad and sick."

"No more Leila," cried he with a pained start, as if such a bereavement would be a great calamity.

"No. No more Leila," she answered, childishly. "I couldn't live where murder had been committed."

The savage looked at her, and his wild eyes seemed to soften. He took one of the little, brown hands that caressed his, and, raising it gently to his bruised and swollen forehead, held it there, that she might feel the throbbing.

"The Irish thief you want to sabe done dat air, honey," he said, morosely, "and he has got to squeal for it. The boy I gib you for a lubber."

"Who's a lubber?" said Terry, indignantly. "You're mighty free giving what doesn't belong to you, Mister Black?"

"And, by my word, ye have a fine cheek, ye buff-skinned, overgrown ourang-outang to want to make a free and enlightened Irishman squeal as if he was a pig or a banshee—bad manners to yer ugly gobb."

Nilo seemed about to burst out angrily, but the girl Leila having hurriedly brought a vessel of water from some part of the cavern, interrupted him by commencing to bathe his head.

"He done it—the dog," he growled, viciously.

"You mustn't blame him so much for that, Nilo. He was in danger and defended himself. You would do the same. Would anybody dare threaten Nilo's life, and he stand coolly by till he was killed? No."

"No, Leila. No," he growled, with fierce pride.

"Why, Nilo, my birds or my pet rabbits would turn upon anything that cornered them?"

"Dey'd be right—right," he said, gradually yielding to the simple reasoning of the prattler.

"Why, then, Nilo, just think," she continued. "I used to be just as cowardly as any bird or rabbit—afraid to stay here alone until you taught me to be brave, and showed me how to defend myself. Didn't you, Nilo?"

"Yah, yah. I did so, chile," he said, proudly. "Nilo can stand a blow widout groanin'. You can hab dar lives, Leila. Fellers, gather dem burning sticks togedder and bring some vittles for de prisoners."

"Look you, Nilo," exclaimed Terry, passionately. "I'm a free-born American, willing to fight for my life and take the chances, willing to be killed and die game if I can't help myself, but I'll be darned into stockings if ye can prisonerize me. I'm for death dead square or freedom, and, mind you, don't you forget it."

He looked around to his companion, as if to see if he concurred in his sentiments, and then first became aware that the Indian boy, Osta, had escaped unnoticed.

This fact gave him hope of rescue, and it was increased by a quick, slight signal of reassurance from Leila.

"It'll turn out all right, Paddy," he whispered to his companion. "The young Indian's gone."

In the echoing vault the whisper, cautious as it was, reached the sharp ears of Nilo. First a dark frown settled on his massive face, and then he burst into a ferocious and derisive laugh.

"You think so, does ye? Yah, yah. You thinks Nilo am a fool, does ye? Keep on thinking so till you larns yer mistake. Ye doesn't know de caves ob Obe! Ye are like flies in a spider web—on'y wuss—far wuss—Yah, yah."

After a short pause, during which the girl stroked his sable cheeks soothingly, and whispered low words into his ear, Nilo suddenly caught up the war-club and struck the metal plate before mentioned.

At the signal the black-skinned myrmidons rushed in and paused awaiting orders.

"Take them," Nilo said, with a wave of his hand.

CHAPTER XI.

AMBUSHED.

It needed not the eager and gasped appealing of the Indian boy to move old Gray and his party rapidly on to the rescue.

"Black Eagle hate Apaches," he said, with a tremor. "He kill—kill—kill—and the wigwams are dark—dark. He tear up stakes from the graves of my people and cut their heads off when they dead."

Many a suspicious glance was cast on the youthful guide, but he bore the scrutiny with the composure of conscious innocence.

At last, as the way they pursued became more and more toilsome and dangerous looking, the discontent and suspicions of the men burst into murmurs.

Old Gray was the first to give plain expression to his thoughts, and laying his hand on the shoulder of the Indian boy, who walked beside him, he said:

"I say, lad, this is a hard-looking way you are leading us. The Navahoes are among the hills ahead, and you are of their people. How do we know that you're true to us, or that you are not taking us into some eternal hornet's nest?"

"Gray Chief, the skin of Osta is dark, but his heart is white and true. The boy-brave spared the life of Osta. I try to pay him back when his life is in danger. It is right that the Black Eagle should make his nest among the rocks that are hardest to climb where his enemies cannot reach him. Is it not so?"

"Yes, that's to be expected, but——"

The old man's speech was interrupted by a sudden and altogether unexpected volley of stones, arrows, and bullets from a tangled covert in advance of them.

A couple of the men fell wounded, and the rest, with shouts of execration, unslung their weapons for bloody work.

As the report echoed among the rocks the young Indian guide started from Gray's side with a wild, peculiar cry, and bounded forward like an antelope, making the air ring with imitations of the cry of the crow, alternated with loudly shouted Indian words.

"Treason! Treason! We are betrayed! Shoot the traitor down," yelled the old man, fiercely.

CHAPTER XII.

SACRIFICED IN ERROR.

The order to fire upon the flying youth was obeyed with angry exclamations and oaths, but the very flurriedness of the marksmen rendered their aim comparatively harmless.

"Missed him!" exclaimed old Gray, in a tone of mingled surprise and disappointment, as he saw the youth continue on his way.

"Not so fast, cap'n," cried Cyrus Root, reloading. "He's got a little jab, as sure's ginger, and yer humble sarvant's in bright hopes of presarving that 'ere head o' ha'r. Yes, by gum! Thar he goes, flop like a lapwing."

The Indian boy had indeed been hit by one of the random balls, and after a few bounds he threw up his arms in wild gesticulation, staggering forward with every sign of distress, and at last fell upon the hill-side.

The party could indistinctly hear his cries to the ambushed Indians, but were puzzled to decide whether they were those of instruction or entreaty, until, to their joyful surprise they saw the hidden savages spring up bare-headed, waving their long-plumed deer-skin caps in their hands, and giving wild vent to the word:

"Pepacotiche!" (Peace).

This was the Navahoe call for a truce, and so great a faith had these wild men of the glens in its efficacy and sacredness, that they unhesitatingly laid down their weapons and descended the hill empty-handed toward their armed foe.

"That means friendly, fellows," said Gray. "The young brown-pelt was straight, after all. It's a pity if we have wounded the younker dangerous."

"Ay, ay!" assented the men.

Only Cyrus grumbled a demurrer.

"It's a greater pity if this consarned truce is to make a stagnation in the ha'r bizness jest at the openin' of the season. Darned shame, nothin' shorter."

Unheeding this business-like objection to the turn events had taken, the party pressed on, leaving a couple to take care of their wounded comrades, who, happily, were found to be only slightly injured.

They found the Indian boy propped up against a boulder apparently faint from over exertion and loss of blood.

His large bright eyes were bent reproachfully on old

man Gray, as he approached, and his musical voice faltered slightly.

"The gray chief did bad to make his men shoot his friend. The boy brave's life may be lost because I cannot go quick to show you where he lies in the nest of the Black Eagle."

"I am sorry," said the old borderer, sorrowfully and impatiently, "we are all sorry that you are hurt, young friend, but it was your own fault kinder, your actions was so suspicious-like; you shouldn't 'a run away so."

"You kill me standing then," said the wounded boy with a pained smile. "The Indian is only a dog to the white man; but he is like the dog, he don't forget good. The boy brave saved his life, and he must save the boy brave."

"How can we?" cried more than one of the white men, impatiently. "If he is in the clutches of that black butcher, there is not a minute to be lost. How will we find him? Direct us if you cannot lead us."

"My words are not crooked enough to tell the path. I must go with you—you must carry me."

"Bravo, my lad!" exclaimed Gray. "There's grit in you that we must not let die. Quick, fellows, sling a blanket stretcher, and Mr. Hair-dealer, you'll lend us some o' yer stock in trade to make a soft pillow for this brave young rooster's head. Won't hurt unworked goods, you know."

"Nary a bit," said Cyrus, willingly. "Has all to be combed out ag'in anyhow, so here ye be."

At length everything being in readiness, six sturdy men lifted the wounded youth upon their shoulders, and commenced their toilsome march through the intricate mountain defiles.

Heavy and slow, indeed, was their progress, and the sun was rushing red down the western sky when their wounded guide faintly called a halt by the side of a mountain stream.

"Water!" he whispered. "I am getting fainter."

Two or three tin cups overflowing with cold, sparkling liquid were simultaneously presented.

He chose that of Gray.

"You're not going to die, my boy," said the old man, in a gruffly kind voice. "You must not die. You are too good a lad and too brave a lad. Your people are too tough to die for a trifle. You must live to lead us to where the boy is—you must live to hear him thank you."

"No, no," said the sufferer, with a smile. "I will never hear him speak, nor he me. His ears will be full of her words—they are sweeter than the sounds of the song-birds—and my words beside them would be rough like the crows. I could not speak when she opened her lips—silence would eat up my words before her."

"She! Her!" said the old man in astonishment. "What does the poor lad mean? He must be raving—his brain wanders."

"No, no," said the subject of his remark, firmly. "I am not raving—I am not mad, I mean her—the dark beauty—the sweet singer—the child of the Black Eagle."

"The child of the Black Eagle!" exclaimed all, in astonishment, caused not so much by the words as by the momentarily increasing clearness and purity of the expression and pronunciation.

"Yes, the child of the Black Eagle!" continued the low, clear voice. "I have seen her in the forest and on the rocks—and in the cave—I have heard her voice in the day-time and the night—it is sweeter than the wild-rose or the Indian-clover, and her eyes are bright as the stars. She will save the boy brave from the rage of Black Eagle, and he will love her for it, although her face is dark. He will never know that I was killed trying to set him free."

"Yes, he will, be sure of it, he will, my boy," said Gray, growing anxious lest his guide should die before the rescue of Terry and Paddy was accomplished. "Only show us the way—only lead us."

"I cannot—I cannot," he said, in a low, moaning manner, while the dark-skinned features seemed to become darker and worked with pain. "Oh, I do wish to the Good Spirit that my mother was here. Oh!" he continued, moving his frail hands feebly together. "I pray to you, Great Spirit, that my mother may come."

The rough men who stood around were bewildered by the changed manner of the youth, and their bewilderment

was changed to a supernatural fear when, as if in answer to the prayer, a voice answered:

"Your mother has come!"

The presence of the new-comer was well calculated to impress the untutored denizens of the wilds.

Her bearing was queenly and commanding—her eyes bright and searching, her features denotive of intellect and firmness in addition to which she was attired in the peculiar costume pertaining to the rank of High Prophetess or Great Medicine.

Yet, though her garb was Indian, her features and voice betrayed no signs of any such origin.

"Oh mother, mother! I am happy now!" said the wounded youth, in a low, joyous voice, raising up his exceptionally small hands toward her.

"What ails my child! Why have you called me?" she said, kneeling beside the sufferer, as a priestess might have knelt before an altar.

"I am dying, mother!"

"Dying! No! no! no! my sweeting. Do not stab your mother's heart with such words!" cried the woman, quickly, catching the youth's head between her hands, and covering the forehead and cheeks with eager kisses.

It was then that the men noticed the wonderful likeness between them, and vague thoughts and suspicions, which had been floating in their minds in regard to the young guide, began to strengthen and take form.

"Speak to me, child. Tell me the matter. Tell me who has injured you," exclaimed the woman, rapidly, glancing fiercely around at the group when uttering the last words. "Where are you hurt. Quick! speak!"

"Here, here, mother!" and the little hand went to the side of the blood-stained hunting-shirt, where the miners had bound a scarf round the wound.

"It was an accident, a mere accident. All these are friends—no one here would hurt me."

"If I thought they would——" said the mother, looking up from her work of unbinding the scarf with a wicked gleam in her eyes that made, at least, the Indians shrink; but she stopped as if lacking words to express the concentration of her feelings.

"This is a gun-shot wound!" she said, with sudden savageness, as she uncovered the bloody spot to view.

CHAPTER XIII.

MORE MYSTERY—MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

She gave herself, however, no opportunity for further words, for, suddenly shoving her hand into the medicine pouch at her side, she produced a small bottle, with the contents of which she drenched the wound.

"Oh, darling," she said, with her head still bent over the prostrate form. "Can it be possible that God or the Great Spirit or whatever name the Ruler goes by, will condemn me to be bereft of you? Was it for this," she continued, her words taking the form of a wailing chant, "was it for this I suffered a hated captivity, and lived—lived that you might live. I saw all my hopes of happiness on earth gone, but what was left in you. Did I not guard you as a tigress does her young? Did I not try to change your nature—your very sex—that you might be mine alone?"

Cyrus Root took advantage of the emotional pause to whisper to Gray and his comrades:

"By the bricks o' Bunker, I suspicioned all along that boy was a gal. I've been a-gazin' the ha'r, with a bizness eye."

"I can hardly believe it," said Gray, "but I s'pose they ought to know best."

"For the best," cried the woman, suddenly, starting from her stupor of grief, and seizing on the last word of the miner as if it had been spoken by her child. "Yes, it was for the best I passed you for a boy child when we were torn from our Missourian home—it was for the best I dressed and kept you so, when I became the wife of the chief and prophetess of the Navahoes. Ha! ha! Oh, fool! oh, silly fool! what a weak, wretched prophetess was I that could not foresee the time approaching when their accursed rules would drive my girl-boy to the war-path, or expose us both to vengeance. Lulu! Lulu! your mother's fondness and her folly have given you over to death. Haste, pray, for

her before your breath is gone. She will not live behind you."

As she spoke in this half-frenzied sort of manner, she drew a glittering knife, which formed a portion of her mystic paraphernalia, and turned the point toward her heart.

The sufferer gave a slight, gasped scream, and made a feeble attempt to grasp the weapon. Gray, at the same moment sprang forward, and snatched it from her hand.

"Mother, you must live—whether I die or live—live for my sake—for the sake of one I love," said Lulu, in a tone of low beseeching.

"You love?"

"I, mother."

"Who, who can have taken your heart from me, Lulu?" asked the mother, bending fondly over her child.

"The boy brave, mother (you have heard of him), he who spared my life, is the only one but you, whose image has sunk into the heart of Lulu."

"He—the white boy-warrior?" said the mother, while a deep shade of sadness seemed to fall upon her heart. "Child, child, what are you thinking of? What love can ever be between the boy and you? You are separated as if by a mighty sea. His race despises yours, and tramples on it, and binds it in loathsome slavery. You are mad, child, to dream of love."

"Who can help it, mother?"

"Child, there is nothing but misery and disappointment in the thought."

The mother sobbed as she took some restorative from her satchel and held it to the girl's lips.

"Yet, why should he not love me, as soon as her?" asked the girl, communing with herself in an absent manner. "She is darker skinned than I am. She is the child of a negro—and my mother has white blood in her veins. Have you not, mother?"

"What do you mean, Lulu, my child?" the woman asked, when her daughter ceased speaking. "Who should he love sooner than you? Who is darker-skinned and the child of a negro? Do you rave or is there any reason for your words?"

"I do not rave—there is reason," was the weak reply.

"I mean the dark girl—the sweet singer—the daughter of the Black Eagle."

"Daughter of the Black Eagle!" echoed the woman, in surprise. He is a demon—a spirit."

"No, mother, he is human—a human negro, but he is a powerful, and revengeful, and bad. He keeps bad spirits in his cave, and practices the black magic you've so often told me of."

Weakness came over her again, necessitating the use of the stimulant once more.

"Mother," gasped the sufferer, with sudden energy, trying to raise herself. "You must save him, for Lulu's sake."

"What can I do, poor child?" said the woman, frightened by the girl's excitement.

"I am ready to direct you with my last breath," said Lulu, faintly.

"Let us go, then, to Black Eagle," said old Gray, who, with his companions, had watched this strange scene with impatience that was only repressed out of respect for the trouble of the two females.

In obedience to the hurried orders of Nilo, Terry and Paddy were caught hold of and borne rather than led through the seemingly impenetrable wall of this strange abode.

The girl who had been the cause of their respite lifted one of the blazing knots and stood waiting to light the steps of the sable giant, who was endeavoring to gain his feet.

This seemed a most difficult undertaking, and he had to take advantage of the hold offered by the inequalities of the rocky wall against which he had fallen before he could accomplish it.

But even then, as he let go his hold and tried to stand unassisted, his immense bulk swayed heavily to and fro, and he had perforce to seize the wall again.

"Chile, chile," he said, as a shudder passed through his great frame, "dar's something dreadful wrong, dar's mischief comin', I tell you."

"How, Nilo? you frighten me. Let me bathe your head. Are you no better?"

"No, chile. It's strange—so strange. I feel your hand, but your voice sounds hollow—hollow—as if you was a mile off—a-speakin' at de bottom ob a well. My head is spinning round and round on my shoulders so fast I cannot see you, and the torch looks like a hoop ob fire bound 'round my brain. Chile, chile, I'm afeared dat Nilo's time has come."

At these words the girl screamed with affright, and releasing her hold, ran calling for help. The negro, missing her support, slight as it was, gave a giddy lurch, and losing his hold on the wall, fell with a thud that seemed to shake the solid rock.

At this juncture his dusky attendants came running, in response to the summons of the girl, and lifted him to a sitting position.

"Chile!" at last came the word faintly from his lips, and bloody foam followed the utterance.

"What is it, Nilo? Can I help you? Speak."

"No hope for Nilo," he said, in a low tone. "It am come. I dreamed ob it. I knew I should hab to die by one ob de skulls ob de victims, and I am dyin', chile, ole Nilo's goin'."

"Oh, Nilo, don't talk so," cried the girl, in an agony of grief. "You cannot die and leave me. What would become of me, Nilo, when you are the only friend I have in the world?"

"You hab been de only comfort ob ole Nilo, chile, and he will not leab you widout fren's when he's dead. I hab thought ob it. I hab studied it all out. I knowed my time was short. My fetish tole me so. Dat war de reason, gal, dat I brought de boy rider to de cave to tell you who you is, and whar to find your frens."

"Who I am?" cried the girl in surprise. "Why, Nilo, I am your chile—and you are my only friend."

"You'se wrong, child," he said, with a mournful shake of his head. "De wife ob Nilo and his chile was murdered by de injuns. Dar loss made Nilo crazy, drove him on to de path ob vengeance—dat's de reason de skulls ob de Nabbahoes hang so thick on de walls ob Obi's cave. Nilo's heart was lonely—he could not lib widout a daughter, dar was no Indian gal so purty as his Lu, and when he saw you, chile, he thought you like her, and his heart jumped toward you. He stol you from your people and brought you to de cave."

"And who, then, were my people, Nilo?" she asked.

"Don't know. Didn't care at de time. I only knowed dat you war a pretty chile, and dat I wanted you. De folks libbed a long, berry long way from here, away in de settlements. But I hab de clothes and documents I stole from dem along wid you. I've kept dem all along so dat you might find your folks whenever I came to die. De time hab come, chile, it hab come."

"Oh, no, no, Nilo; do not talk of dying. I have no one but you."

"It must be, chile," he replied. "I hab dreamed it, I tell you, ober and ober again. I knew it when I saw de image ob my wife helpin' de boy and de Irishman to get away. I know it. I know it. Josh, bring de boy here."

One of the black attendants withdrew, and returned almost immediately with Terry.

"Is he there?" asked Nilo, as he heard their footsteps.

"Yes."

"Well, fetch me de box at the head of my bed."

The man went out and returned with the box.

"Boy," said the Black Eagle, fumbling with the lid until he managed to get it open. "I didn't fetch you here to do you harm. I fotched you cos you had l'arnin', and I wanted you to read dese papers for me, dat dat poor gal may find her folks when I am gone away. Read, boy, read."

Terry took the papers and held them toward the torch in the hand of one of the men.

"These are deeds of property in Nebraska," he said, "drawn by the Commissioners of Government Lands in favor of—DANIEL GRAY!"

With the last words the boy's voice rose nearly into a shout. Indeed, it was so loud that it caused the Black Eagle to start and turn his sightless eyes toward the youth.

"What's ye yellin' for!" he cried, half-angrily, and the exertion seemed to make him weaker, for he fell back

again, saying, "Thar, chile, youse heard your father's name and whar he lives—Nebraska—dat's de place, shure enuff."

Terry turned a wondering gaze upon the girl's black yet comely face, and said, in the same loud tone of surprise:

"That Dora Gray? That the daughter of Dan Gray?"

"Where, where, is my child?" cried a half-frenzied voice, and the white-headed father and his comrades rushed into the cave.

"Where is she, boy, that I may clasp her to a father's heart."

He looked around, but, seeing only the dark-skinned girl, he paused in amaze.

"Here are the deeds of your Nebraska property, sure enough," said Terry, handing the papers, "but he must be mad and raving, for he says this colored girl is your child. She is his own daughter."

"He am not mad. He am not raving. She am not his own chile!" cried the negro giant, springing erect by a furious effort, and catching the surprised and frightened girl by the arm, for it seemed as if his sight had suddenly returned. "Give me de box. Does ye need proof? See hyar. I stained her when she war a baby, so's no one'd claim her from me. Look!"

He caught a small box of ointment from the larger box, and rubbing it across her forehead, the effect was that the skin, wherever he touched, turned instantly white.

"Ha! ha! Who's mad? Who raves? Who am Nilo's daughter? Old man, she am your chile. De wife and daughter ob Nilo are moldered into grave-dust years ago. Dey am dead—dead—dead!"

"No—no—Nilo! they are here! they are alive! rang a shrill voice from the dark passage, and Lulu was dragged into view by her excited mother, whose sooner appearance her weakness had delayed.

Nilo had buried his head in his hands during his lamentation, and rocked himself to and fro, but, at the sound of the voice, he started erect with a frightened snort, like that of a wild beast.

"Chile, I told you. De hour ob Nilo's death hab come, or dey would not be here. Lulu! Lulu! Nilo comes!"

With a stagger toward the sound, and one great quiver of the frame, he clasped his hands to his head, and fell like a forest tree before the ax of the chopper.

(THE END.)

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PLAY BALL.

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I've a friend named Dan McCloskey, and he's crazy on base-ball.

I told him I could play third base, but sure I can't, at all. McCloskey said his "nine" would play that coming Saturday,

And when I heard my name called out, I bought a suit to play.

We went out to the base-ball grounds, and all dressed up in tights,

And when we came out on the field we looked such holy sights.

McCloskey, he went first to bat, and knocked a little fly, But the bum short stop, he let it drop, and the mob began to cry:

"Play ball! Play ball! You'd give a man a fit,
You muffers, you bluffers, you cannot play a bit;
To make us pay a quarter each you have an awful gall."
All through the game they would exclaim: "Play ball!
Play ball!"

When our side got the fielding, McCloskey made a muff,
And some one on the benches yelled: "McCloskey you're a 'stuff.'"

At that poor Mac got awful mad and grabbed a bat to fire,

It missed the man upon the stand and struck the poor umpire.

The captain of the "Neversweats" began to scowl and frown,

Before the man had time to think, McCloskey had him down,

Oh, I myself was scared to death, and from the field I fled,
And when the fight was at its height the umpire to us said:

"Play ball! Play ball! You'd give a man a fit,
You muffers, you bluffers, you cannot play a bit;
To make us pay a quarter each, you have an awful gall;"
All through the game they would exclaim: "Play ball!
Play ball!"

And when the game was over, 'twas an interesting score,
McCloskey's nine were beaten by just eighty-six to four.
Poor Mac's saloon was crowded with a broken-hearted mob,

And if you'd ask them, they would say, the umpire was a slob.

At twelve o'clock I started home as drunk as I could be,
I kicked the door and rang the bell, like an Indian on a spree.

My wife raised up the window-sash and then put out her head,

She gave a roar, "Who's at the door?" and this is all I said:
"Play ball! play ball! Come down and let me in;
My daisy, I'm crazy because we didn't win."

And when I gained an entrance, sure there came an awful squall;

And now I'll shoot the man that says: "Play ball! Play ball!"

